

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. MARY E. MILLER**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 8, 2021*

Mrs. MILLER of Illinois. Madam Speaker, by accident, I failed to vote on H.R. 1, the "For the People Act" while on the floor for the vote series. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 62.

HONORING THE LIFE OF HECTOR  
F. ELIZALDE**HON. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 8, 2021*

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a true champion for veterans, a dear friend, a wonderful employee and colleague, a proud resident of the City of Monrovia, and a dedicated, caring gentleman in Hector Elizalde, our beloved Deputy District Director of the 32nd District, who died on February 7, 2021, from complications due to COVID-19. For the past 11 years, Hector was truly devoted to his job of defending, advocating for, and serving veterans and their families, and tackling any problem that came his way. He was the embodiment of what it means to serve one's nation and one's community, holding true to his pledge to never leave a soldier behind, whether on the battlefield or city street.

Hector F. Elizalde was born in Chicago, IL on February 15, 1946. He served in the United States Army from July 31, 1964, until he was honorably discharged on July 28, 1967. Hector later graduated from California State University, Los Angeles with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science. He worked for some of America's most recognized companies, such as Anheuser-Busch, Stroh Brewery Company, PepsiCo, and Don King Productions. His career advancements led the Elizalde family to live throughout the country, from 1984, in the states of Michigan, Connecticut, New York, and Florida until his return to California in 1997. Hector could have continued excelling in lucrative professions, but he had a great sense of duty to any and all fellow veterans, and also to his neighbors.

From the very first day he entered our office in the spring of 2010 until his very last on this earth, Hector honorably served the veteran community. Whether it was helping a homeless veteran find shelter or escorting the casket of a fallen servicemember at the airport, Hector's compassion for helping veterans touched countless lives. Giving out his personal cell phone number was nothing out of the ordinary, and whenever he did so, he made sure everyone knew that it was a 24/7 number.

Hector understood the frustration many veterans felt because of delays in VA benefits and routine health checkups that would take an entire day. He took this personally and vowed we must do better. Under his tenure as Military/Veterans Liaison, we began to hold an annual Veterans Forum, to bring the VA to the San Gabriel Valley, which grew in size and reach each successive year. As a result of

Hector's persistence and laser-focus on the mission, the San Gabriel Valley VA Health Clinic was opened in May 2019 in Arcadia, CA.

A sharp dresser, but very humble individual, he never sought nor wanted praise. He was there for everybody. He served not only the people of the 32nd District, but all of Los Angeles County, as Chair of the Los Angeles County Veterans Advisory Commission, to which he was appointed by LA County Supervisor Kathryn Barger.

Since his passing, the outpouring from people whose lives he touched has been immeasurable, because he was a true believer in public service. From the many hours he spent resolving constituents' casework, to the city council meetings, weekend veteran and community events he would attend; for Hector, the public's needs always came first.

Hector is survived by his ex-wife, Elaine, the mother of his two adult children; sons Phillip and Edward; Edward's wife Ingrid; and their two children, Isabella and Aiden. Hector truly loved and was proud of his family, especially his grandchildren.

Hector made us all feel like family. He was kind, respectful, thoughtful, and helpful to everyone he met. His charisma and smile will never be forgotten. His laughter and the way he cared for others will forever live on in our memories. It was our honor to be able to work alongside him.

The world has lost a hero. Hector was the best of the best, and we are all better people because of him. There is no one else like him and probably never will be, but it is safe to say, our world needs more Hectors.

## IN MEMORY OF LAURA COLE

**HON. CHELLIE PINGREE**

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 8, 2021*

Mrs. PINGREE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and remember an extraordinary Maine woman, Laura Cole.

Laura lived her life purposefully, offering help and engendering hope and happiness as a partner, parent, volunteer, friend, business owner, and citizen of Maine. She understood the power of one person's voice and helping hand, and her spirit was contagious.

Laura exemplified the words of Edward Hale, "I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something; and because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do something that I can do."

It seems there was very little that Laura did not do, and she received several awards for her efforts, including the Presidential Volunteer Service Award in 2012, the Responder of the Year Award in 2013, and the New Maine Business of the Year for York County, Maine, in 2019. She spearheaded her community's Operation Santa program for kids and the annual Lebanon Community Festival. In the midst of this winter that has been darkened by a pandemic, she created two acres of holiday lights for the community to enjoy from their cars and drop off canned food to donate to local food pantries. And she used proceeds from her event photography business to support End 68 Hours of Hunger and buy lunches to support local restaurants and donate to first responders.

Not only did Laura devote her life to acts of kindness and caring, her final gifts were organ and tissue donations, providing lifesaving help and health to over a dozen people. In her honor, the family has established Laura's Legacy of Love as a living memorial project with a simple mission—to promote kindness by paying it forward in her name.

I am proud to have represented Laura Cole in the U.S. Congress—an indefatigable young woman who loved Maine and set an extraordinary example for us all.

100TH BIRTHDAY OF EMMIE  
'BOOTS' BURK**HON. JOAQUIN CASTRO**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 8, 2021*

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Madam Speaker, it is with great honor that I rise today in celebration of Mrs. Emmie 'Boots' Burk to commemorate the very significant milestone of her 100th birthday.

Emmie Fulton Burk was born on Texas Independence Day, March 2, 1921 in Koblenz, Germany to an American military family stationed overseas. Growing up in the State of Georgia she learned the importance of family and tradition. She was a member of the first Girl Scout troop on Ft. Screven, Georgia (Tybee Island). When her father, MSgt. Benjamin Fulton was later stationed at Ft. Sam Houston, San Antonio, Emmie moved to finish high school in 1939. She has been a proud Texan ever since.

In 1942, she married the love of her life, James William Burk. She helped raise their son and daughter and became very active in their children's school and extracurricular activities, as well as church and other community service. She was independent and career driven. After the passing of her husband in 1979, she worked to solely support herself eventually going on to work in the early stages of market research. After several years in the industry, she began her own company, Burk Market Research, growing it into a successful venture through the 1970s to 1990s.

A faithful public servant, she worked with the United States Census Bureau assisting with many monthly studies, to include current population studies. This led her to travel across our great country to many different areas, where she helped lead the count. In 1991, she received the Bronze Medal for meritorious service. Mrs. Burk retired in 2011 at the age of 90 with 43 years of service, making her one of the longest serving members in the Bureau's history.

Today you will find Mrs. Burk attending one of her great grandchildren' events. A strong family-driven mind, Mrs. Burk dedicates her time to family and making new joyful memories. Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor Mrs. Burk and a tremendous life well-lived. I thank Mrs. Burk for her many years of public service. It is my hope that she will share her 100th with all her loved ones.